

... was filling a diploma

**PRICES OF PAINTINGS.**  
**Great Finestonnians Through Which the Works of Great Artists Have Passed.**  
**LONDON, Aug. 8.**—A portrait of Lady Betty (now Mrs. Russell) was sold last month for 100 guineas, a consistent advance on the high prices given for all objects of art this year, a striking opposition to the supposed financial depression. It is not without interest to note the fluctuations and variations of price to which valuable paintings have been subjected since a comparatively restricted period. A French school picture, which was sold at a public auction in London for only 100 guineas, which seemed to show that Englishmen are, as a rule, anxious to remain in possession of the masterpieces of their own artists, preference to those of foreign artists. Yet we find in the seventeenth century Lord Arundell, and in the eighteenth century the "Good House" of the Duke of Buckingham, who could not be induced to part with it.

As a rule, however, it is not connoisseurs but amateurs who bring a painter into fashion; the ignorant masses follow the lead of equally ignorant buyers, bidding higher and higher for pictures till the last purchaser, coming forward at the flood tide of popularity, finds that he has made a very poor bargain, and is eventually the chief loser. The sea paintings and landscapes of Joseph Vernet realized as much as 3,000 livres in 1770, an enormous sum for the currency of the time, and yet they would with difficulty fetch an equivalent sum to-day.

The first important sale of paintings occurred the last century, and took place in Paris in 1787. The collection belonged to the Intendant de Verrue, the fair friend of the Duke of Orleans, who was "more wittily than naturally" able to make a fortune out of it, and won it in this world. A David Teniers sold for 200 livres, possibly because Louis XV., to whom one had shown a picture by that artist, had said, "Remove these abortions!" The great paintings of Watteau, which would be worth a hundred times as much as the 631 livres; but, stranger yet, two pictures by Rembrandt were knocked down at 450 livres. The other hand, by an equally inconceivable lack, two paintings by Rubens brought 200 livres, two by Wouvermans, 3,030, and a Bergius, by Hansel, by the Comte de Clermont, 100 livres.

In order to understand the discrepancy between these prices it is necessary to bear in mind the taste and fashion at that time had been formed almost unanimously in favor of the Italian and Rubens schools, the latter painter having personally left in France the reputation of a great artist and a grand seigneur. Claude Lorrain, whose real name was Claude Gellée, had been a celebrated painter of genius in Rome, hence the immense vogue obtained by his paintings. The French artists who are so deservedly admired to-day achieved only slow and tardy recognition.

In 1738, in Brussels, the Comte de Fraula sold pictures, and the prices were lower still, reckoning florins equal to two shillings of English money. "A Lion Hunt," by Rubens, brought 105 florins; "A Bacchante," by Poussin, 650 florins; "The Man with the Red Coat," Rembrandt, 355 florins, and the "Portrait of an English Lady," by Van Dyck, 53 florins. At present, a French denier is worth only one

1756 the "Liseuse," by Correggio, at the sale of the Duc de Tallard was knocked down for 3,901 livres, and the biggest price yet paid for any one picture was given for the "St. Cecilia" of Rubens, 20,000 livres. However, in 1811, the portrait of Tintoretto, by the same artist, was disposed of for 60 livres only. It is about this period that Rembrandt comes to be appreciated; his two paintings at the Louvre, "The Philosopher Meditating" and "The Philosopher in Contemplation," brought

drawings and cartoons were literally given away; fifteen sketches by Leonardo da Vinci were publicly sold for 9 livres in 1741, six drawings by Michael Angelo for 14 livres, two by Andrea del Sarto for 8 livres, and ten drawings by Raphael for 163 livres. In the 18th century, the great Dutch landscape painter, to wait long for recognition of his talent; one of his best landscapes was sold at Leyden in 1741 for the modest sum of 525 florins. In the 19th century, the French masters fared no better — up to the

nd half of the seventeenth century. A pas-  
Boucher was sold for 41 livres in 1763; at  
sale of Mme. de Pompadour in 1768 two  
series of a somewhat *risqué* character by the  
e artist suddenly leaped into popularity and  
ized 9,800 livres. Watteau, who had seen  
"Pierrot," now one of the gems of the  
vre, go for 36 livres twenty-five years be-  
was able to know that his "Concert in a  
den" fetched 2,100 livres at the sale of Mme.  
osed.  
euze, whose canvases are now covered with

received only 800 livres for one of his lively female heads at the very time when two escapes by Joseph Vernet brought 6,000 s and a *Salvator Rosa* 12,012 livres. Quite remarkable are the 6,000 livres paid for *Illo's* "Noces de Cana" and the 845 for Paul Veronese's "Baptism of Christ."

players were equally successful, which, however, did not prevent some valuable pictures from going for a song. This sale was the last artist one before the revolution. In 1793 the finest collection in France, belonging to the d'Orleans, was dispersed and only three figures are worth recording. A "Holy Family," Raphael, at 18,375 livres, the "Virgin of the Clouds" by the same artist, at 75,750 livres, and a "Holy Family" by Michael Angelo at 2,362 livres. The remainder of the collection of the English were the figures literally given away, as on their record. The National Gallery bought the Duke of Marlborough's 475,000 livres.

and a little later the Marquess of Lande sold to the State the "portrait of a gentleman," by Velasquez, one picture by Morena, two pictures by Holbein for 200,000; but a piece of Van Dyck's his portrait of the Emperor, cost the National Gallery only 100,000.

The Rothschilds own a superb picture gallery in London. Three female portraits by Shakespeare cost £77,000, and for two items in the collection of the Princess de Saxe they paid £18,000.

America has not been behindhand in securing the pictures which were paid for magnificently. The Seney collection, April, 1850, 650,000 francs paid for a Rousseau, which, the

and originally sold for 350 francs. A portrait by Diaz, bought for 2,000 francs in Paris, sold in New York for 20,000. Mr. Morgan paid 10,000 francs for a Troyen which some later reached the price of 40,000 francs in New York. A Corot for which the painter received 250 francs was purchased for 370,000 francs. Another American bought for 450,000 francs a Millet which the poor painter had sold with in his destitution for a loaf of bread. Van Praet, the Belgian statesman, bought "Le Anceux" for 2,000 francs; the next year, Mr. J. Wilson, died in 1881, when the rose in value to 100,000 francs, and after M. Secretan had to pay 580,000 francs for it.

1880,000 francs. The American Art Association offered 780,000 francs for the painting. Thaurhaud got it back for 780,000 francs—500,000 more than the sum for which it left the artist's hands.

Let it be the best example of how dealers and artists can make the greatest profits on an artist's work; he himself barely made a living out of it. What have changed hands for millions of francs did not always experience the same fate. The "Boy" which I bought for 30 francs, was bought for 250,000 francs by Vanderhilt. "1814," for which 800,000 francs was given by M. Thaurhaud, was sold for 90 francs to M. Delahante, who parted with it for 500,000 francs. Watteau, so depreciated a hun-

Van Dyck would have realized his most ambitious dreams of fortune. The portrait of the *use spinola* by Van Dyck was sold for 500,000 francs to Mr. spinola and is jealously held in America; it was sold by the master for 1,000 francs. Baron Alphonse de Rothschild bought the portrait of the *use spinola* for 500,000 francs and the portrait of the *use spinola* for 500,000 francs. The same day, at the sale of the *use spinola*, the *use spinola* was sold for 500,000 francs and the *use spinola* for 500,000 francs. Ward and the Duc d'Aumale 825,000 francs and the "Virgin of the candelabra" for 500,000 francs.

numerous opposition arose when the govern-

paid 100,000 francs for the Virgin of  
his now at the Louvre, a more than inde-  
fensible reckoning by the present standard. Art  
was passing through a crisis, and moderns  
a being every year more plentiful, their  
taste fluctuate enormously in price and judge-  
ment much more so, indeed, than those of their  
ancient predecessors. Both in England and  
France men who five or six years ago secured  
average prices of £4,000 to £5,000 for their  
works are compelled to sell them for a much  
smaller sum, or let them remain unsold  
in their studios, although they have ob-  
tained success at the Academy or Salon.

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